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Evolutionary Perspectives on Discourse Markers in Cyber-Pragmatics

Between Dialogical Silence and Filler Expressions

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Defining the Digital Void

What Are Discourse Markers?

Signals used to manage spontaneous conversation — guiding turn-taking, emphasis, and coherence in real time.

The Written Absence

In prepared or written communication, these markers are largely absent — the spontaneous signal is suppressed.

BACKGROUND

- Artificial Intelligence has become an active participant in everyday communication.
- AI-generated discourse increasingly resembles human interaction.
- Pragmatic competence is essential for effective communication beyond grammar and vocabulary.
- Understanding how AI performs speech acts helps explain the nature and limits of human–AI communication.

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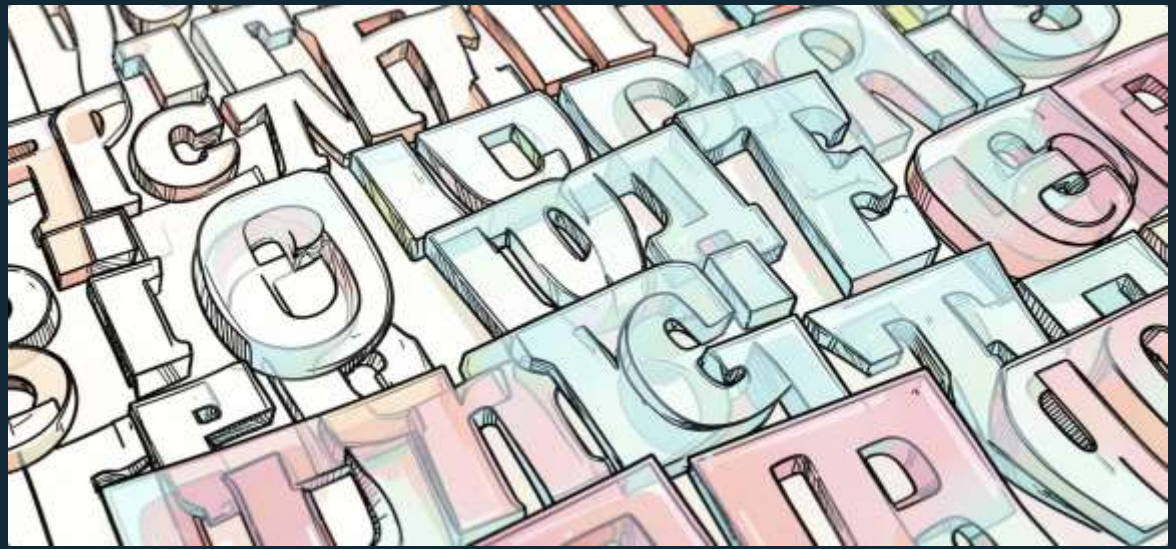

LINGUISTIC STRUCTURE

AIM AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

To examine the realization and pragmatic functions of speech acts in AI-mediated communication.

Research Questions

RQ1:

Which speech act categories occur most frequently in AI-generated responses?

RQ2:

How are pragmatic functions realized across different communicative contexts?

RQ3:

To what extent does AI simulate communicative competence through speech act production?

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METHODOLOGY -Research Design

AI-generated interactions

Qualitative study

- Interpretative analytical approach

1 — 2 — 3

Pragmatic discourse analysis

Theoretical Framework

Austin (1962)

Searle (1969)

Cyber Pragmatics (Yus, 2011)

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DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

Corpus

• AI-generated dialogues• Human prompts and AI responses• Multiple communicative scenarios

<u>Analytical Procedure</u>

Data Collection↓

Speech Act

Identification↓

Pragmatic Classification↓

Interpretation of Findings

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RESULTS:DOMINANT SPEECH ACTS

Most frequent categories
- Representatives
- Directives
- Expressives
- Commissives

Key Observation
AI predominantly produces informative and supportive responses rather than institutionally performative acts.

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RESULTS:PRAGMATIC PATTERNS

The analysis revealed:

- High degree of politeness
- Preference for cooperative communication
- Context-sensitive adaptation
- Consistent mitigation strategies.

RESULTS: ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLES

Prompt:
Can you help me write an email?
AI Response:
Certainly. I would be happy to help.
Speech Act:
Expressive + Commissive

Prompt:
Explain this concept.
AI Response:
This concept refers to...
Speech Act:
Representative
Key Finding:
Multiple speech acts frequently co-occur within a single response.

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RESULTS:INTERPRETATION

Findings suggest that:
- AI reproduces recognizable pragmatic structures.
- Speech acts appear systematic rather than random.
- Communication is highly patterned.
- Responses simulate intentionality without possessing genuine intentions.

Rise-Fall Intonation → Emoji
Emojis encode the prosodic contours once carried by voice

Eye Contact → Reaction GIFs
Visual responses substitute for embodied feedback cues

Universal Digital Syntax?
Conventionalized combinations may be emerging across languages

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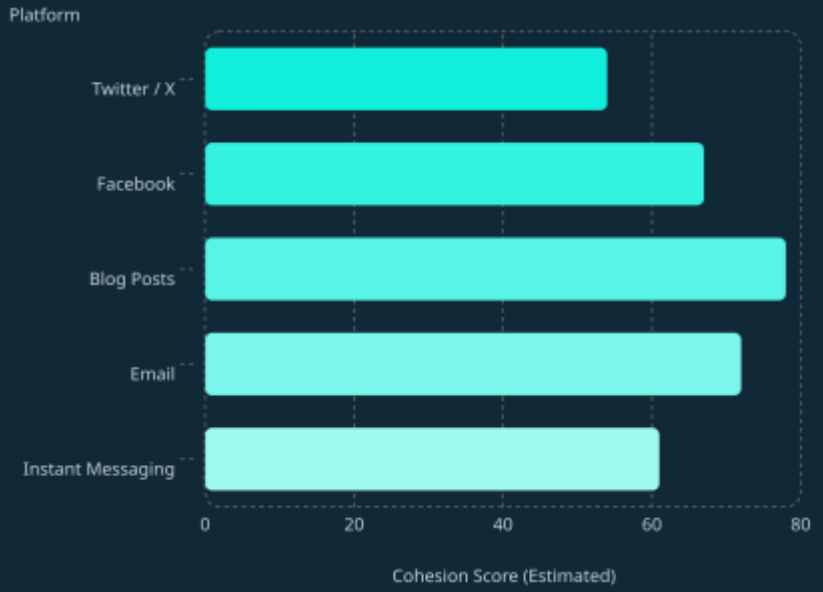
Building Coherence in the Digital Age



Estimated cohesion scores across platforms — illustrating the variation in marker density and discourse structure.

DISCUSSION

Speech Act Theory Perspective

- Austin: locutionary and illocutionary force are present.
- Searle: speech act categories remain applicable.

Discourse markers offer the necessary framework for humanizing algorithmic spaces — bridging machine logic and human intuition.

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CONTRIBUTION

Theoretical Contribution

• Extends Speech Act Theory into AI communication.

Methodological Contribution

• Demonstrates applicability of pragmatic discourse analysis to AI-generated discourse. Practical Contribution• Improves understanding of human–AI interaction.

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CONCLUSION

• Three Main Takeaways

- AI successfully simulates pragmatic behaviour.
- Speech acts remain central to AI-mediated communication.
- Simulated pragmatics requires new interdisciplinary approaches.

Future Research

• Larger corpora
• Cross-platform comparison
• Multilingual AI communication

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THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION